

**Fight of Faith**  
**CROWNED.**

OR, A

**SERMON**

PREACHED

At the **FUNERAL** of that  
Eminently Holy Man  
**Mr. HENRY STUBS.**

---

By **THO. WATSON** Minister of the Gospel.

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**LONDON**

Printed and are to be sold by *Joseph Collier* at the  
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THE

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PREFACE

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By THE REV. J. STORZ, Minister of the Gospel.

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4233, 4235, 4

THE  
EPISTLE.

Christian Reader,

**I**T was not my intendment to have appeared thus publicly, but being requested by the near Relations of this worthy Minister deceased to print my Sermon, (which by their appointment was preached) I knew not well how to withstand their importunity. Indeed I was the more willing to let these lines be published, that I might raise a Pillar of Remembrance to the precious name of Mr. Stubs. The Subject-matter treated on is the Christian Combat and Crown. O blessed Crown which cannot be fully pencilled out in its orient colours, though an arch-angel should take the pencill. The Roman Emperours had three several Crowns set upon their heads; the first was of Iron, the second of Silver, the third of Gold. God sets three Crowns upon the Elect, Grace, Joy, Glory. What should we thirst after but this incomprehensible bliss! Did our thoughts dwell above, we should live sweeter lives. The higher the Lark flies, the sweeter it sings. Cyprus was anciently called Macaria, the blessed Island; but it is more true of Heaven, it is the blessed Island. 'Tis a place where sorrow cannot live, and joy cannot die. It may be compared to the fields of Sicily, where there is continual Spring, and flowers all the year long. Could our Meditations mount up to the Empyrean delights, how would the World disappear

Caryton.

and shrink into nothing! Must needs say so to ignorant  
salvage. To those who stand upon the top of the Alps,  
the great Cities of Campania seem as little Villages.  
After St. Paul was wrapt up into third Heaven, the  
world was crucified to him, Gal. 6. 14. Worldly things  
when they are in their highest meridian of glory hasten  
to a Sun-setting, ~~the radiant vision~~. let us live more  
in the altitudes, and take a prospect of the eternal re-  
compences; what can be more delicious or sacred than  
to have Christ in our heart, and the Crown in our eye.

I have inserted something more into this Sermon,  
than straits of time would permit in the delivery. If it  
may inkindle holy ardours in the breasts of any, and  
quicken their pace in the way to Heaven, I have my  
option. That this may be effected is the prayer of him  
who is

Thy Friend and Servant

in the Gospel,

THO. WATSON.



2 TIM. IV. 7, 8.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness.



These words were spoken by Paul the aged not long before his death, ver. 6. I am now ready to be offered, or (as the word *καταβιβασθαι* signifies) to have my blood poured out in sacrifice. And what a comfort was it to make this noble profession

before his departure, I have fought a good fight, &c. The Text falls into three Parts:

1. St. Pauls Courage, I have fought a good fight.
2. His Constancy, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.
3. His Crown, Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness.

Here is a large field, and I can but pluck a few Ears of Corn, I begin with the first part of the Text.

1. Pauls Courage, I have fought a good fight, *καταβιβασθαι*, I have fought to an agony.

Observe first, A Christians life is military, 1-Tim. \* *ἡμῶν ὁ πόλεμος*

1. 18. That thou maist war a good warfare; \* a Saints *ἐκπορεύεται* life *ἡ ζωὴ τοῦ ἁγίου*

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life is not effeminate and slothful, but like the Soldiers life.

1. In respect of *hardship*: A Soldier hath not his soft bed or daily fair, but undergoes tedious marches; such is the Christian life, *2 Tim. 2.3. Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.* We must not be *delicatuli* (as *Tertullian* speaks) filken Christians, but expect to wrestle with difficulties: The naked neck is too soft and tender to bear the Cross of Christ.

2. In respect of *Watchfulness*: A Soldier gets up to his Watch-tower, and sends abroad his scouts for fear the Enemy surprize him; a Christian must *excubias agere*, stand sentinel, be ever upon his guard. It was Christs Watch-word, *Mark 13. 37. I say to you all watch.* When you have prayed against sin, watch against temptation.

3. In respect of *Combat*, *1 Tim. 6. 12. Fight the good fight of faith.* In order to which fight, a Christian must get his Armour and Weapons ready.

1. He must get his *Armour* ready, the care of most is to get riches, not armour; there are two things absolutely needful, *food* and *armour*; 'tis necessary to get Christ for our food and grace for our armour without this there is no abiding the day of Tryal: A Soldier that wears his Princes Colours, but hath no armour, will soon fly the field; such as by a profession wear Christs Colours, but have not the *Armour of God* upon them, will turn their backs in the day of battel.

There are two chief pieces of the spiritual armour.

1. The *Helmet*, that is, *Divine Hope*, *1 Thes. 5. 8. For an helmet the hope of salvation*: An Helmet is to  
of

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3

defend the head that it be not hurt \*; so the hope of salvation as an Helmet defends a person, and makes him lift up his head in the greatest dangers. But Christians, be sure ye get the right helmet, the helmet of hope may be counterfeited.

1. The first deceit of the Helmet, or a false hope, is a dead hope; Hypocrites have a faint velleity, they hope for Heaven, but exert no activity in working out salvation; but true hope is a *lively hope*, 1 *Pet.* 1, 3. Hope of Glory sets an edg upon the affections, and adds wings to the endeavour.

2. A false hope is an unclean hope, a man hopes, but sins; 'tis vain to speak of hopes of salvation, yet have the marks of damnation: True hope is an Helmet made of pure metal, 1 *John* 3.3. *He who hath this hope, purifieth himself.*

3. A false hope is vanishing, 'tis not an *Helmet*, but a *spiders Web* \*; the least terror of Conscience \* *Job* 8. 14: shakes it, but a true hope is permanent, *Prov.* 14.32. *The righteous hath hope in his death*, in a dying hour his hope is in a living God. When *Quintian* the Persecutor commanded to cut off the breasts of *Agatha* a Martyr, Do thy worst Tyrant (said he), yet I have two breasts which you cannot touch; the one of Faith, the other of Hope. \* O get the right *Helmet*, the Devil laughs at Hypocrites to see how they are couzened with false armour: A fool is contented with a Paper-helmet.

2. The second piece of the Spiritual Armour is the *breast-plate*, which is *Love*, 1 *Thes.* 5.8. *Putting on the breast-plate of Love.* This breast-plate is inseparable, it may be shot at, but it cannot be shot thorow, *Cant.* 8. 7. A soul armed with love, will

go

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go through a Sea, and a Wilderness, he will dye in Gods service.

\* *Ignatius*.  
*Epist. ad Romanos*.  
*cap. 10.*  
*magis quam*  
*vitam*  
*habere*  
*volui*  
*Christum*  
*sequi*  
*ignatium.*

\* 2. A Christian must get his weapons ready. 1. The shield, Ephes. 6. 16. *indiaon*, Above all things taking the shield of faith.

Epaminondas was not so careful of his life, as of his shield: A shield is of great use, it defends the head, it guards the vitals, it keeps the arrow from entering into the body; the shield of faith defends the heart, and beats back the fiery darts of temptation. *Scena* a Roman Soldier did so long resist Pompey's Army, till he had above an hundred darts sticking in his shield—*Densam portans in pectore solum*—\* Hold forth the shield of faith, and nothing can hurt you.

\* *Lucan.*

2. The sword, Ephes. 6. 17. The sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. 'Tis good for a Soldier to be well skill'd in his weapon, the word of God is a weapon to stab lust at the heart; 'tis observable when the Devil tempted our Saviour, he ran to Scripture; 'tis written \* three times Christ wounded the old Serpent with this spiritual weapon.

\* *Mat. 4. 10.*

And having gotten into this warlike posture, a Christian must in *arenam descendere*, enter the lists, and fight the good fight of faith. In the future life the Saints shall be out of the noise of the Drum and Canon, and not one stroke shall be struck more; then they shall not appear in their armour, but their white robes, and with palm-branches in their hands in token of victory \*; but here they must fight the Lords battels \*, and no cessation of arms till death; and there is a threefold Regiment they must encounter with.

\* *Rev. 7. 9.*

\* *Certent singuli*  
*ut accipiant co-*  
*ronas*, *Cypr.*

I. The

## The Fight of Faith.

5

1. The lusts of the flesh which war against their souls,  
*1 Pet. 1. 11.* The flesh is a sly intestine enemy, and  
 least suspected\*; an enemy got within the walls of the  
 Castle is most dangerous. Luther said he feared his  
 own heart more than Pope or Cardinal, the heart  
 is the *springer* of sin\*; it mints evil thoughts, and  
 blows up the coals of fiery passions; it is the *Trojan*  
*horse*, out of which comes a whole army of lusts. And  
 shall not we fight the good fight, and discharge with  
 the fire of zeal against this bosom-traytor the flesh?  
 The Primitive Christians cried, *Ad leonem potius*  
*quam lenorem*; they chose rather to be destroyed by  
 Lyons without, than lusts within.

\* *Si foris ho-*  
*stem non habes,*  
*domi invenies,*  
 Livy.

\* *Fomes picca-*  
*ti,* Aug.

2. The second Regiment to be resisted, is Satan  
 and the infernal Powers\*, *1 Pet. 5. 8.* Your adver-  
 sary the Devil as a roaring Lyon walketh about\*: He  
 walketh about not as a *Pilgrim*, but a *spy* that nar-  
 rowly observes; there were *lyers in wait for Sampson*,  
*Judg. 16. 12.* Satan like a musketeer lies in ambush,  
 and his design carries death in the front, seeking whom  
 he may devour: He tempts one man to be drunk,  
 another to be unclean; he sets Kingdoms a-quarrel-  
 ling, that at last he may devour them, like him who  
 sets two cocks of the game to fight, that having  
 killed each other, he may sup with their carcasses.  
 Doth this hellish *Goliath* come into the field, and de-  
 fire the living God? and shall not some spear be lift  
 up against him? *1 Pet. 5. 9.* Whom resist steadfast in  
 faith.

\* *Ephes. 6. 12.*

\* *1 Pet. 5. 8.*

3. The third Regiment Christians must fight a-  
 gainst, is the enchantments of the world; the world  
 is a flattering enemy, it kills with embracing; world-  
 ly things are *retinacula spei*\*, they hinder our progress.

B

sage

## The Fight of Faith.

sage to the holy Land ; they choke good affections, as the earth puts out the fire ; whom the world kisseth it betrayeth. *Heliogabalus* made ponds of sweet water to drown himself, and guilded poysons to poyson himself ; the world destroys millions with her sweet waters of pleasure, and her guilded poysons of preferment ; let us then gird on our Armour, and fight valorously

Good reason we should *fight the fight of Faith*, because we carry rich treasure about us : he who carries a charge of money about him, had need be in a fighting posture. We carry a precious soul about us ; if the Cabinet of the body be so curiously wrought and embellished, *Psal.* 139. 15. Then what is the jewel in it ? The soul is a spark and beam of celestial brightness \*, a blossom of eternity, and shall not we by our martial prowess and chivalry defend this treasure ? to be robbed of the soul is an irreparable loss. God (saith *Chrysostom*) hath given thee two eyes, if thou losest one, thou hast another ; but thou hast but one soul, and if thou art robbed of that, thou art undone for ever.

*Use 1.* Is the Christian life military ? To blame then are they who have no spiritual Artillery, nor do they make one sally out against the Enemy. 'Tis death to go abroad unarmed ; People spend time in dressing themselves by the glass, and putting on their jewels, but do not put on their sacred Armour, *Job* 21. 12. *They take the Timbrel and Harp, and rejoyce at the sound of the Organ ;* as if they were rather in *musick*, than *battel*. *Lycurgus* would have no mans name written upon his Tomb, but his who dyed manfully in War : God writes no mans name in the

Book



## The Fight of Faith:

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Book of Life, but his who dyes fighting the good fight of faith.

Use 2. Give battel to Sin and Satan, and pursue them with an holy malice \*: and to encourage in the fight, let these things be weighed.

\* *Quis sanctorum sine certamine coronatus est, Hierom.*

1. It is *certamen præclarum*, a good fight: 'Tis a lawful War; Princes may commence a War to invade other mens rights and properties; but God hath proclaimed this War against sin\*, Col. 3. 5. Mortifie therefore your members, fornication, inordinate affection.

\* Gen. 3. 15.

2. We have a good Captain: Jesus Christ is the Captain of our salvation\*, Hebr. 2. 10. If a flock of sheep have a Lyon for their Captain, they need not fear the Wolf: Christ is the Lyon of the tribe of Judah, Revel. 5. 5. He not only leads us on in our march, but helps us in the fight: A Captain may give his Soldier armour, but he cannot give him strength: Christ animates and strengthens us\*, Isa. 41.

\* *Forti animo pugnare decet, sub Christi auspiciis & ven- illo, Calv.*

10. He puts his spirit within us\*, and so we are more than conquerors, Rom. 8. 37.

\* Eph. 6. 10.  
\* Ezek. 36. 26.

3. Our Enemy Satan is beaten in part already; Christ hath given him his deaths-wound upon the Cross, Col. 2. 15. The Devil may roar against a Child of God, but shall not hurt him: he could not touch Job's life, much less his soul; therefore fear not, resist the devil and he will fly from you, Jam. 4. 7. Satan is a conquered Enemy, he knows no march but running away.

4. Fighting is the best way to have Peace, by sitting still, we tempt the Enemy to fall upon us, and wound us; our peace is preserved by War with Satan\*: he who hath been skirmishing all day, may

\* *Pax nostra bellum contra demonem, Terul.*

B 2

take Terul.



## The Fight of Faith.

take *David's* pillow at night, and say, *in pace cubabo*, I will lay me down in peace.

Quest. How may we so fight the good fight as to overcome?

Ans. 1. Let us fight in the strength of Christ, Phil. 4. 13. *I can do all things through Christ's strengthening me.* Grace it self, if it hath not a good second, will be beaten out of the field; some fight against sin in the strength of their vows and resolutions, and so are foiled. We must go out against our spiritual Antagonists in the strength of Christ; as *David* went out against *Goliath* in the Name of the Lord, 1 Sam. 17. 45. The Saints overcame the accuser of the brethren by the blood of the Lamb, Rev. 12. 11.

2. We must fight upon our knees by Prayer: Prayer is *flagellum diaboli*, it whips the Devil\*; the arrow of Prayer put into the bow of the promise, and shot with the hand of Faith, pierceth the old serpent. Prayer brings God over to our side, and then we are on the strongest side; let us pray that God will inable us to overcome all our ghostly Enemies. While *Joshua* was fighting, *Moses* was praying on the Mount, Exod. 17. 11. so while we are fighting, let us be praying, Ephe. 6. 13, 18. The way to overcome is upon our knees.

3. The second part of the Text, is, St. *Paul's* Constancy, *I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.*

*I have finished my course*], *cursum peregi*—I have run out nature's lease, I am come to the period of life, prefixed, and am stepping into eternity: *I have kept the faith*, that is, I have kept the Doctrine of Faith, I have lived the life of Faith.

2. Observe,

## The Keeping of the Faith.

9

2. Observe, Christians should hold on till they come to the finishing of their Faith, *a ceteribus ad metam*; 'tis not enough to begin well, to put forth fair blossoms of Religion at first, but we must *perseverare usque*, continue firm to the end. \* This is the glory of a Christian not only to hold forth the truth, but to hold fast the truth, *Act. 21. 16. Mnaſon of Cyprus an old Disciple*; 'tis a beautiful sight to see silver hairs crowned with golden vertues. It was the honour of the Church of *Thyatira*, her last works were better than her first, *Rev. 2. 19*. The excellency of a medicine is when it keeps its verue. To finish the course and keep the faith, is like generous Wine that keeps its spirits to the last drawing.

\* Non pugnant sed vincemus  
dabitur corona.  
Aug.

Use 1. Here is a bill of inditement against such as before the finishing of their course, have departed from the faith; they are fallen to worldliness or wantonness, the very mantle of their profession is fallen off. *Definit in Piscem mulier formosa superne*. Such were *Lucian, Porphry, Peter Castellon, Judas*. *Judas* hath many successors. *Demas* forsook God, \* and afterwards became a Priest in an Idol-Temple, saith *Dorotheus*. *Julian* bathed himself in the blood of beasts offered in sacrifice to Heathen gods, and so as much as in him lay, washed off his Baptism. Things which move from an artificial spring quickly cease; unsound hearts having only external artifices of Piety, but wanting a vital principle of Grace, soon make a stop in Religion. How can they adhere to God who never loved him? The Soldier who hath no true love to his commander, will throw off his Colours. *Hos. 8. 3. Israel hath cast off the thing that is good*. We have had more shipwracks at Land than at Sea,

2 Tim. 4. 10

Sea,

## The keeping of the Faith.

Sea, men have made shipwrack of their conscience, 1 Tim. 1. 19. Apostates unravel the work they have been doing for Heaven, they pick out all their golden stitches, Ezek. 18. 14. As if a Limner should with a pencil draw a curious piece, and then come with his sponge and wipe it out again. Apostates drop as windfalls into the Devils mouth, they having disparaged the ways of God, and put Christ to open shame, Heb. 6. 6. God will make them do penance in

\* Heb. 10. 38. Hell \*.

Use 2. Persevere in the Faith. What is a man the better to run some part of the race and then tire? so to go within an inch of Heaven, and then fall short \*. Who makes reckoning of corn that sheds before harvest? or fruit that falls from the tree before it be ripe? O Christians, remember your Salvation is now nearer, Rom. 13. 11. You are within prospect of the Holy land, and will you now tire in your march? this is as if a Ship laden with Jewels and Spices, and within sight of the shore should be cast away; or as if a Jew had been running to the city of refuge, and had gotten within half a furlong of the city, and then had fainted, and been slain by the avenger of blood. 'Twas Beza's Prayer, Lord, perfect that which thou hast begun in me, that I may not suffer shipwrack when I am almost in the haven.

\* Non quatuor  
tur in Christi-  
anis initia, sed  
fuit. Hieron.

\* Domine quod  
capisti perfice,  
ne in portu  
naufragium  
accidas.

Mot. Consider, persevering in the Faith is a note of discrimination between a true Saint and an Hypocrite; the hypocrite he sets up in the trade of Religion, but will soon break; he advanceth his mast and top-sail, and sets out fair for Heaven, but in time of temptation falls away, Mat. 13. 21. but a true Christian is fixed in holiness, he is not as a wave of the Sea, but

as

## The keeping of the Faith.

11

as a *Rock* in the Sea. His zeal like the fire of the *Vestal Virgins* in *Rome* is always kept burning.

That we may spin out this fine thread of Religion to its full length, and hold out to the end,

1. Let us be well-grounded in the Fundamentals of Religion, the Doctrine of Justification, Regeneration, the Resurrection, and the eternal recompences, *Col. 1. 23. Grounded and settled*; such as are unprincipled will be led into any error, the *Masse* or the *Alchoran*, you may lead a blind man any whither; he will hardly ever suffer for the truth that doth not know it.

2. If we would hold on in the Faith, let us preserve a jealous fear of our selves; fear is the souls life-guard, it causeth vigilance, it banisheth presumption, *Rom. 11. 20. Be not high-minded but fear*. If God lets go his maintenance, we fall. How many have been over-turned with self-confidence as the vessel with the sail. *Pendleton's* proud brag was soon confuted, instead of his fat melting in the fire, his heart melted; the fear of falling keeps us from falling. Fear begets prayer, and prayer begets strength, and strength begets constancy.

3. If we would keep the Faith to the end, let us labour to tast the sweetness of Religion in our own souls, *Psal. 34. 8. O tast and see that the Lord is good*. The light of Truth is one thing, the relish is another, *Psal. 119. 103. How sweet are thy words unto my tast, yea sweeter than honey*. Many fall away because they never tasted what Religion was; they could tast some sweetness in corn and oyl, but Promises were *dry breasts*. If the wine of the Word have ever chear'd our heart, we will never part with it.

4. If

## The Crown of Righteousness.

4. If we would continue our progress in the ways of God, let us be *inlaid* with sincerity; this silver thread must run through the whole chain of our duties. A Christian may have a *double principle*, but he hath not a *double heart*; he is *perfect with the Lord*, *Deut. 18. 13.* Nothing will hold out but sincerity; *Psal. 23. 21. Let integrity preserve me.* When Job could not hold fast his Estate, yet he held fast his Religion; whence was this? from his sincerity. *Job 27. 6. My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go, my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.* The garment of Job's profession did not tear, because it was lined with sincerity.

\* *Μεγαλὰ τὰ κίνητα.*

3. The third part of the Text is *St. Paul's Crown*, *Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness*; it is *Corona recondita*, a Crown laid up. A Christians best things are to come\*. Well might the Apostle say, *It doth not yet appear what we shall be*, *1 Joh. 3. 2.* We are here as *Princes in disguise*, the world knoweth us not; but there is a Crown laid up. While we are *laying out* for God, he is *laying up* for us.

And what Crown is this? a *Crown of Righteousness*. The felicity of Heaven is described sometimes by a *city* for riches, *Heb. 11. 10.* sometimes by a *country* for pleasure, *Heb. 11. 16.* sometimes by a *Crown* for honour. And this Crown hath various Appellations:

1. It is called a *Crown of Glory*, *1 Pet. 5. 4.* it is full of splendor, therefore said to be bespangled with Stars, *Rev. 12. 1.* We can no more bear a sight of this Crown till God enlarge our capacities, than a weak eye can bear the dazling beams of the Sun.

2. It is called a *Crown of life*, *Jam. 1. 12.* whoever heard before of a *living Crown*? It is a Crown of life,

life, not only (as *Grotius* saith) because it is bestowed in the life to come, but because it enlivens with joy; it not only Crowns the head, but chears the heart. 'Tis a *living Crown*.

3. It is called a *Crown of Righteousness* in the Text; not that it is of right due to us, or comes of *merit*, as the *Papists* corruptly gloss; we cannot deserve a *crum* at Gods hands, much less a *Crown*. That which merits must be a *gift*, not a *debt*, whatever service we do for God is a *due debt*; nay, we cannot pay *all*; nay, that which we pay is not in *current money*, our duties are stained with sin, where then is merit? but it is called a *Crown of Righteousness*, because it is purchased by Christs righteousness, and because God having promised this *Crown*, it is righteous in him to bestow it.

Hence observe thirdly, for the persevering Saint there is laid up a *Crown of righteousness* in Heaven;

\* a *Crown* is the highest ensign of worldly happiness.

'Tis only for Kings and Persons of renown to wear;

there is a *Crown of righteousness* laid up for the Elect.

'Tis a *massy Crown*. The *Hebrew* word for glory signifies a *weight* \*; things that are precious, the more

weighty they are the more they are worth. The

weightier a chain of Pearl is the more it is worth.

The Heavenly *Crown* is expressed by a *weight of glo-*

ry, 2 Cor. 4. 17. This *Crown of righteousness* doth out-vye, and exceed all earthly *Crowns*.

1. It is more *refined*; earthly *Crowns* are interwoven with troubles; they are not made without crosses. It was King *Henry the Seventh's* motto, a *Crown of Gold* hung in a bush of *Thorns*. But the *Saints Crown* is not mixed with care, it adds no sorrow with it.

C

2. The

\* כתר  
ראוי. למלך.  
ולא לרשע.  
יגאל.

כבוד.



## The Crown of Righteousness.

2. The Crown of righteousness is given to every individual Saint. Here the Crown goes but to one person, a Crown of gold will fit but one head; but in Heaven every Saint is a King\*, and hath his Crown.

\* Rev. 1. 6.

3. The Crown of righteousness doth not draw envy to it. *David's* Crown was an eye-sore to *Ab-salom*, and he would have plucked it from his Father's head, but in the life to come different degrees of glory, shall neither stir up pride, nor cause envy; for though one Crown may be bigger than another, yet every ones Crown shall be as big as he can carry.

\* In yncor.

ist u. c. 1. 1.

2. 1. 1. 1.

Chryl.

\* Menochian.

4. The Crown of righteousness is everlasting; that which disparageth earthly Crowns is, they are corruptible, *Prov. 27. 24.* *Can the Crown endure to every generation?* Terrestrial Crowns soon moulder into the dust, but the Crown of righteousness is a Crown of Immortality, it neither spends nor fades\*, 1 Pet. 5. 4. *Ye shall receive a Crown of righteousness which fadeth not away. Corona virens, non (quales ille ex hereda & lauro) marcescens* \*. Eternity is a Jewel of the Saints Crown.

*Quest.* What is the quiddity or matter of which the Coelestial Crown is made?

*Answ.* The Crown it self consists in the Beatificall sight and fruition of the all-glorious God\*. What else is the Angels Crown but *visio*, the beholding of Gods face, *Mat. 18. 10.* *Deus & Coronator, & Corona* \*; to have intellectual transforming sights of God, will ravish the Elect with infinite delight: *Chrysostom* saith, The souls of the blessed shall be bespangled, with some of those illustrious beams of Gods glory which shall be trans-

\* In vision  
Dei ut primi  
veri, & amore  
Dei ut summi  
boni consistit  
Corona.  
\* August.



## The Crown of Righteousness.

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parent through the bright mirrour of Christs Humane nature. If there were such gladness when *Solomon* was Crowned, *1 King. 1. 40.* They rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound; what mighty acclamations and triumphs will be on the Saints Coronation day? such will be the extasies and divine raptures of joy, as exceed our very faith\*. The delights of Heaven may be better felt than expressed. Whatever can be said of the Cœlestial Crown is but *gutta de mari*, as a drop to the Ocean, nay, scarce so much.

*Premium  
quod fide non  
asingitur.  
Aug.*

*Quest.* When shall the Saints receive this Crown of righteousness?

*Ans.* They shall receive it in part immediately after death, before their bodies are buried, their souls are crowned, *2 Cor. 5. 8.* Absent from the body, present with the Lord; if the Crown were not instantly bestowed after death, it were better for believers to stay here, for they are here daily encreasing their Grace; here they have some bunches of Grapes by the way, sweet foretastes of Gods love, so that they had better stay here, if they had not a speedy transition and passage to glory. But this is the consolation of believers, that they shall not stay long for their preferment; no sooner did *Lazarus* die, but he had a convoy of Angels to carry him to *Abrahams* bosom. Christians you may be happy before you are aware, it is but winking and you shall see God.

The full Coronation will be at the Resurrection when the bodies and souls of Believers shall be reunited; their Bodies shall be Crowned with immense felicity, and clarified like Christs glorious body.

C 2

*Quest.*

## The Crown of Righteousness.

*Quest.* But why is the Crown at all deferred, why is it not set on a Christians head presently?

*Ans.* It is not yet the proper season.

1. We are heirs *under age*; we receive but *Primitias spiritus*, the *first-fruits of the spirit*, Rom. 8. 23. Grace is in its minority; now, though some Princes have been crowned in their Cradle, God crowns none till they are of perfect stature. Sin incorporates with grace, would we partake of glory while we partake of sin?

2. Our work is not yet done, we have not *finished the faith*; the labourer doth not receive his pay till his work be done. Christs reward was deferred till he had perfected his work, *Joh. 17. 4, 5. I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do, and now O father glorifie me.* The Lord doth not think it meet that we should have our pay before hand; when we have arrived at the *end of our faith*, then comes *salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 9.

*Use 1.*

*Br. 1.* See then there is nothing lost by solid piety; after fighting the *good fight of faith*, comes the *Crown of righteousness*. When we hear of the severe part of Religion, steeping our souls in the brinish tears of repentance, mortifying our complexion-sin, we are ready to grumble and mutiny, but *do we serve God for nought*? will he not compensate our labours with a Crown? yea, such a Crown which as far exceeds our *thoughts* as it doth our *deserts*. No man can say without wrong done to God that he is an *hard master*. The Lord gives double pay, he gives great *vails* in his service here, *inward joy and peace*, and afterwards he refresheth us with the delights of Paradise which are without intermission and expiration;

On: O what a vast difference is there between *duty enjoyed*, and *glory prepared*! What is the shedding of a tear to a Crown?

2. *Branch*. See what contrary ways the godly and the wicked go at death; the godly are advanced to Crowns of Glory, the wicked are bound with *chains of darkness*, *Jude 6*. But what are these chains? Surely such as no *aqua-fortis* can eat a-sunder. By these chains I understand God's Sovereign Omnipotency, fastening sinners under wrath (as the chain doth the Prisoners) that they cannot stir: Sinners may break the chain of Gods *Precepts*, but they cannot break the chain of his *Power*: This is the unparallel'd misery of impenitent souls, they do not go to a Crown when they dye, but to a Prison; O think what horror and despair will possess the wicked when they see themselves ingulphed in tremendous flames, and their condition hopeless, helpless, endless \*. A servant under the old Law, who had an hard master; yet every seventh year being a year of *Jubilee*, or release he might go free; but in Hell there is no year of release when the damned shall go free, *Mark 9. 44*. What is become of mens intellectuals? Have they lost their reason as well as their conscience? Why do they not bethink themselves in time what sin will bring them to, though now it shows its colour in the glass, yet in the end it will bite as a serpent, *Prov. 23. 32*. If a man had but a sight of Hell (saith *Bellarmino*) it were enough to make him sober, yea turn *Hermite* and *Anchorite*, and live a most mortified life.

\* ubi nec qui:  
torquetur mori-  
tur, nec qui  
torquet fatiga-  
tur, Bern. Flor.

3. *Branch*. See the grand folly of such as for vain pleasures and profits will lose this celestial Crown: It may

may

## The Crown of Righteousness.

may be said of them, as *Eccles. 9. 3. Madneſs is in their heart.* *Tiberias* for a draught of water loſt his Empire; men ſwallow temptations like pills, which gripe their conſciences, and afterwards make them forfeit bleſſedneſs. This will accent and inhanſe a ſinners torment, and will cauſe *gnawing of teeth*, to think how ſillily he loſt paradise; for a flaſh of impure joy, he parted with the quinteſſence of happineſs. Would it not vex one to think he ſhould be ſo inveigled as to part with his land of Inheritance for a fit of muſick; ſuch are they who let Heaven go for a ſong. If Satan could make good his brag, in *giving all the glory and kingdoms of the world*, they could not countervail the loſs of Heavens Crown; whenever a ſinner dyes, the Devil will beg him for a fool.

4. *Branch.* If the Saints are installed, and have the Crown-royal ſet upon them at death, then what little cauſe have we to mourn immoderately at the death of godly friends? God allows us tears; *Jacob* wept over his dead Father\*; tears give vent to grief—*ſtrangulat inſuſus dolor*—but there is no reaſon we ſhould grieve exceſſively for our pious friends, they receive a *Crown*, and ſhall we mourn when they have preferment? Suppose you had a dear relation beyond the Sea, and you ſhould hear he were Crowned King, would you grieve to hear of his advancement? Thy friend who *dies in the Lord*, receives immediately a Crown of Righteouſneſs, and will you be caſt down with ſorrow? Why ſhould you ſhed tears immoderately for them who have all tears wiped from their eyes? Why ſhould you be ſwallowed up of grief for them who are ſwallowed up of joy? They are removed hence for their  
their

\* Gen. 50. 1.

their advantage, as if one should be removed out of a smoky Cottage to a Pallace? The Prophet *Elijah* was removed in a *fiery chariot* to Heaven; Shall *Elishah* weep inordinately, because he enjoys not the company of *Elijah*? Is it not better to have sparkling Crowns and white Robes, than to *sojourn in the tents of Kedar*? Is it not better to live among Angels than *fiery serpents*? Is it not best to have Christs banner of love displaid over us? Are there any sweeter smiles or softer embraces than his? Why then should any macerate, and even intomb themselves in sorrow for their relations? *Theocritus* saith, it was a custom among the Ancients to have their ~~wedding~~, or funeral banquet, because of the felicity they supposed the parties deceased did enter into; O thou who *hangest thy harp upon the willows*, and with *Rachel* refusest to be comforted; remember there is no wiping away tears from the eye, but with the winding-sheet; thy friend could not be in the Region of the blessed, till he dyed; his dying-day was his *ascension-day*: O then keep thy tears for thy sins, but do not torment thy self with grief for him, whose soul is as holy as it would be, and as happy as it can be.

*Use 2. Tryal.* Are we heirs to this glorious Crown? Such only as are *righteous persons* shall wear the *Crown of Righteousness*: The *work of righteousness* goes before the *Crown of Righteousness*, *Isa. 32. 17.* Are we not only *Morally*, but *Theologically* righteous? Have we a righteousness of *imputation* procured for us by Christs merit, and a righteousness of *implantation* produced in us by his spirit? Are we consecrated with the anointing Oyl of grace? God gilds the elect.

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elect with the beams of his own Holiness, and makes them shine like himself. Have we both circumcision of heart, and circumspection of life? If we are righteous persons, we are sure to wear the Crown of Righteousness.

Let not the profane presume of happiness; let not them think to go to Heaven *per saltum*, to leap out of *Delilah's lap* into *Abrahams bosom*, 1 Cor. 6. 9. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? God will not lay a Viper in his bosom, or set a Crown upon the head of a swinish sinner.*

*Use 3. Exhort.* It hath a double aspect: 1. To all in General.

1. Believe that there is a Crown of Righteousness laid up for all that *fight the good fight*. Some of the *Rabbins* say, that the great dispute between *Cain* and *Abel* was about the world to come: *Abel* affirmed a Crown of recompence for the godly, *Cain* denied it. This truth concerning the real *Elysian* delights in reversion, should be graven upon our hearts as with the *point of a diamond*. Carnal persons look upon the felicities of the other world, but as a *Platonical idea*, or fancy; they do not see the Crown with bodily eyes, therefore they question it: The verity of the soul may as well be questioned, because being a spirit it cannot be seen: *Doubting* of Principles, is the next way to *denying* them. Let us set our seal to this, there is a Crown of Righteousness laid up. Where should our Faith rest but upon a Divine Testimony? The whole earth hangs upon the word of Gods Power, and shall not our Faith hang upon the word of his promise? *Tit. 1. 2.*

*In*



## The Crown of Righteousness.

21

In hope of eternal life, which God who cannot lye hath promised. The Saints Crown is purchased by Christs blood, *Ephes. 1. 14.* and Christ will not lose his purchase. What was the end of Christs ascension? He went up to Heaven, not only to invest himself, but all believers with Glory; as an Husband takes up Land in another Country in the behalf of his Wife. What did Christ pray for, but that all the Saints might be with him? *John 17. 24.* And what Christ prayed for as he was man, he hath power to give as he is God: Besides, the Lord hath given us the *unction* of his spirit to prepare us, and the *earnest* of his spirit to assure us of happiness, *2 Cor. 1. 21.* and he will not lose his earnest; so that the Crown of Righteousness shall indubitably be bestowed. To question this, is to destroy the main Article of our Creed, *life everlasting.* Such *Atheists* as judg the eternal recompences fictions, put God to swear against them, that they shall never see life, *Heb. 3. 18.*

2. Branch. Strive for this Crown\*. I have read of those who travel in long Pilgrimages to the holy Land, they have hard lodgings, and pass through a number of dangers; and at the end of their journey pay a large tribute at the *Pisan* Castle to the *Turks*; and when they come thither, they see only a bare sepulchre, where it is supposed their Saviour lay. Did they take such pains to gratifie their superstitious devotion? What *Herculean* labour then should a Christian undertake in his journey to the true land of promise, whereby he shall both see and enjoy his Saviour, and not enter into his Sepulchre, but Palace, and be eternally crowned with the delights of the *Jerusalem* above.

\* Sen. Herc.  
Fur. Non est  
ad astra mollis  
et terris via.

we but take as much pains for Heaven, as others

D



## The Crown of Righteousness.

\* *Evanſius*  
ad 115.

others do for the world, undoubtedly we might obtain it, *Phil. 3. 15. Reaching forth unto those things which are before* \*. A metaphor taken from Racers, that reach their necks forward, and strain every limb to lay hold upon the prize; let us contend, *tanquam pro aris & focis*. There are two things requisite for a Christian, a watchful eye, and a working hand; to *purpose*, let us add *pursuit*. What scuffling is there for outward honours? Men will wade through blood to a Crown. Was there such strife for a corruptible Crown in the *Olympian* and *Isthmean* races? Sometimes the Crown bestowed upon the Victor was made of *Olive*, sometimes of *Mirtle*, sometimes of *Cynamon* enclosed in Gold; but still, it was corruptible: O then how strenuously should we labour for the Garland made of the flowers of Paradise, which never fade! With what vigour and resolution did *Hannibal* march over the *Alps* for the obtaining terrestrial Kingdoms? How should we act then *ad extremum virium*, for that Orient Crown which shines ten thousand times brighter than the Sun in its *meridian* splendour. *Luther* spent three hours a day in Prayer: *Anna* the Prophetess departed not from the Temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day, *Luk. 2. 37*. The learned *Calvin*, *Jewell*, *Perkins* were indefatigable in their pursuit after Glory.

Let us look to this *Cloud of Witnesses*, and bestir our selves, ply our Oar, double our Files; Who would not toyl all day, to catch salvation at night? when the flesh crys out, *What a weariness is it?* Who can endure all this labour? say, it is worse enduring Hell! The labour for Heaven, though it seem *pungent*, it is *transient*; the fight is quickly over, and then comes the *immarceſcible* Crown.

2. It

2. It hath a particular aspect to believers.

1. Be full of anhelations and longings for this Crown of Righteousness. Doth not the banished Prince desire his native Countrey? The unwillingness of Christians to go hence shows,

1. The weakness of their Faith; They question their interest in this *excellent glory*; were their title to Heaven more cleared, they would need patience to be content to stay here any longer.

2. The weakness of their love. Love (as *Aristotle* faith) desires Union. Did men love Christ as they should, they would desire to be united to him in glory. St. Paul desired to be *dissolved and be with Christ*, *Phil. i. 23*. It was the speech of an holy man on his death-bed, *My heart is in heaven, Lord lead me to that glory which I have seen already as through a glass* \*. We are encompassed with a body of sin; should not we long to shake off this viper? We are combating with Satan; should not we be willing to be called out of the bloody field, where the bullets of temptation fly so fast, that we may receive a victorious Garland? We now live far from Court, we do rather *desire* God than *enjoy* him; should not we long to be crowned with the blissful sight of Gods face? Though we should be content to stay here to do God service, yet we should ambitiously desire to be always sunning our selves in the light of Gods countenance; think what it will be to be led into Christs wine-celler, to have the kisses of his mouth, to smell the *Savour of his ointments*, to lye in his bosom, that *bed of love*; think what it will be to have unstained honour, unparallel'd beauty, unmixed joy; what it will be to tread upon stars, to dwell among *Gherubims*, and to feast on those *dulcia ferula*, heavenly delicacies

\* Mr. Rollock,

A<sup>c</sup>t. 10. 11.

and rarities wherewith God himself is delighted. Methinks our souls should be big with longing for these things, and we should be put into such a blessed *Pathos* of desire, as *Monica*, who hearing of the joys of Heaven, cryed out, *Quid hic facio?* What should I do here? why is my soul held any longer with this earthen fetter of the flesh? would but God give us some *Idæa*, or imperfect glimps of Heavens Glory; how should we be ready to fall into a Trance with *Peter*? And being a little recovered out of it, what earnest suiters would we be to be caught up for ever into the Heavenly Paradise.

2. You who are the heirs of Glory, be exhorted to work with all your might for God: Love and serve God more intensely than others, who hath laid up such things for you, *an eye hath not seen, nor can it enter into mans heart to conceive*, 1 Cor. 13. 58. *Always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing your labour is not in vain in the Lord—immensum gloria calcar habet—* St. Paul had a spirit of activity for God, 1 Cor. 15. 10. *I laboured more abundantly than they all.* St. Pauls obedience did not move slowly, as the Sun upon the dial, but swiftly as the Sun in the firmament; whence was this, his eye was upon the Crown, *Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness*: The recompence of reward may add wings to duty, and oyl to the flame of zeal. What are we that God should incircle us with happiness, and not others? that he should (as *Jacob*) cross his hands, lay his right hand upon us, and his left hand upon others; O discriminating grace for ever to be adored, how can we serve God enough? If there could be tears shed in Heaven, it would be for this that we have been so lame in our duty, and have brought no more revenues into the Heavenly Exchequer.

3. Let

3. Let this be as *Bezoar-stone* to revive and bear up your hearts under all your present sufferings, *Act. 20.*

23. *Bonds and afflictions abide me.* Affliction is the Saints diet-drink; instead of *Roses* they are crowned with thorns. You may aswell separate weight from lead, as sufferings from a Saints life, *2 Cor. 9.8. We are troubled on every side.* Believers are as a ship that hath the waves beating on both sides, but this Text may buoy them up from sinking, there is glory which doth succeed and exceed all their sufferings. The Saints now drink in a wormwood-cup, but shortly they shall drink in a *spiced cup*, and tast the same heavenly *Nectar* as the Angels. One days wearing the *Cœlestial Crown*, will abundantly pay for all their sufferings, *Rom. 8.18. I reckon that the sufferings of this present time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* The weight of glory makes affliction light. O ye Saints who are the true *birds of paradise* sing in winter, there is glory behind, and every suffering will be like a grain put in the scale to make your glory weigh heavier. Suffering Saints shall have more Jewels hung upon their Crown.

4. Let this be an antidote against the fear of death. The day of death is (as *Seneca* calls it) *æterni natalis*, the birth-day of eternity; believers are not fully happy till death\*. Death therefore is made a part of the inventory, *1 Cor. 3. 22. Death is yours.* When the mantle of the flesh drops off, the soul ascends in a triumphant chariot; God hath promised his people a portion, but it is not paid them till the day of death. 'Tis their fathers good pleasure to give them a Kingdom, *Luk. 12. 32.* but they cannot see it till death hath closed their eyes. Why then should the Saints be troubled at death? indeed I wonder not

\* Sicut testatorum quavis pulchre formata, necesse est tamen eam frangi ut inde pullus procedat, ita hujus corporis necesse est testam, ut statim ille sublimior regni celestis effulgeat, *Clem Al.*

that.

that the wicked are appal'd, and scared at the approach of the *King of terror*; they are in debt to Gods justice, and death as Gods Serjeant arrests them, and drags them before the Divine Tribunal. But why should any of Gods children be under such consternation, and have *the trembling at the heart*? What hurt doth death do to them? it pulls off their fetters and puts jewels upon them; it leads them to gates of Pearl, rivers of pleasures. Faith gives a title to Heaven, death a possession.

Go forth my soul, said *Hilarion* on his death-bed, what fearest thou? why should the godly dread their priviledg? is a Prince afraid to cross the narrow Seas who is sure to be Crowned assoon as he comes at shore? This puts Roses into the pale face of death, and makes it look more ruddy and amiable; it is *aditus ad gloriam*, it crowns the Saints with all the delights of the Empyræan Heaven.

I Have done with the Text, it remains that I should speak something to the occasion.

It hath pleased the all-wise God to take to himself lately, that reverend and faithful Minister Mr. *Henry Stubs*, whose death we now commemorate. *The memory of the just is blessed.* *Fulgentius* calls a good name *the godly mans heir*, it lives when he is dead. This *man of God* hath left a sweet savour and perfume behind in Gods Church, besides his atchievement of humane learning, he was enriched with the knowledg of *Christ crucified*. The Graces excell the Muses.

He was very humble; humility is the best garment a Minister can preach in\*. He was *one of a thousand* for integrity. The plainer the Diamond is, the richer.

1. Pet. 5. 5.

He

He was a grave Preacher, and did chuse rather to speak *solide* than *floride*. He spake as became the Oracles of God. Levity is below the majesty of Preaching.

He was a painful labourer in Gods Vineyard; he preached *in season and out of season*. The souls of people were dearer to him than his life \*. Praying and Preaching was rather his *delight* than *task*. He was a burning lamp consuming himself to give light to others.

\* Nec propter  
vitam vivendi  
perdere causam.  
D. Reyn.

He preached feelingly; he felt those truths in his own soul which he recommended to his Auditors; an unconverted Minister is like a Lute; making sweet Musick to others, but it self is not sensible; this *elect vessel* retained a scent and relish of those sacred Truths which he poured out to others.

He lived much by faith, and had sweet converse with God; all the Saints have Gods heart, but some have more of his company.

He was Exemplary in his deportment; he did *3. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. 101. 102. 103. 104. 105. 106. 107. 108. 109. 110. 111. 112. 113. 114. 115. 116. 117. 118. 119. 120. 121. 122. 123. 124. 125. 126. 127. 128. 129. 130. 131. 132. 133. 134. 135. 136. 137. 138. 139. 140. 141. 142. 143. 144. 145. 146. 147. 148. 149. 150. 151. 152. 153. 154. 155. 156. 157. 158. 159. 160. 161. 162. 163. 164. 165. 166. 167. 168. 169. 170. 171. 172. 173. 174. 175. 176. 177. 178. 179. 180. 181. 182. 183. 184. 185. 186. 187. 188. 189. 190. 191. 192. 193. 194. 195. 196. 197. 198. 199. 200. 201. 202. 203. 204. 205. 206. 207. 208. 209. 210. 211. 212. 213. 214. 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## The Crown of Righteousness

He was of a sweet temper, never fierce but against sin. He was devout towards God, affable to his Friends, loving to his Relations.

1 Thes. 2. 19.

The Lord honoured his Ministry very much, he had a double Crown; the souls he converted were his *Crown of rejoicing* \*, and now he wears a *Crown of Righteousness*. How great a loss hath Gloucestershire and London of this eminent Minister! It hath been told me, that he set apart some time every day to pray for the Church of God; he (like *Moses*) lay in the breach to turn away wrath; we shall soon grow poor if we lose such praying friends. During the time of this good mans sickness, he was asthmatical, and laboured much for breath, so that he could not utter himself so freely, but what was heard to drop from him was very savoury. He said he had fled to the city of refuge, and recited that Scripture, *1 Tim. 1. 12. I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.* I pray God give all who are concerned in this loss, wisdom to improve this present stroke, and make a living Sermon of their dead Minister. He is now *ubi corpus*, he enjoys the sight of that God whom he so pathetically longed for upon his death-bed. He is got into the upper region above all storms. His body is returned to dust, and his soul to rest. He is enclosed in happiness, as the word for *Crowning* imports. *He is as rich as the Angels*, though he hath lost his life, yet not his Crown.

\* כתר.



